

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 5 are pending in this case. Claims 6-9 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Uota (Japanese Application Publication No. 09/302,889) in view of Ito (Japanese Patent Publication No. 10-183940). Claims 1 and 5 are allowed.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of Claims 1 and 5.

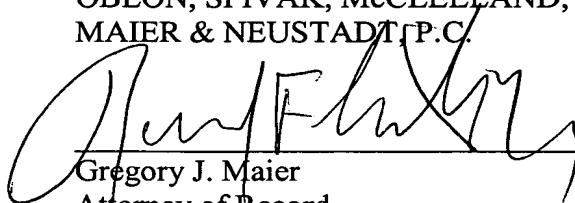
Claim 9 is canceled, making the outstanding rejection moot.

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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